

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 13, 2003

LB 407, 759

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Synowiecki. Senator Bromm.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Mr. President. I'm not in a position to judge the value of this program. I don't necessarily question the value. I think there probably is much merit in having a concentrated effort towards encouraging cessation of smoking. However, for me it comes to a question of, if we're going to continue such a program, how can we afford to fund it in the times that we're in? And that's what caught my attention when I saw the proposal to pay for it out of Cash Reserve, which in my view is just about the same as General Fund money. I know we've got Cash Reserve money from tobacco tax. But it's all General Fund money once it's there. I will support the Raikes amendment, because I do feel we need to take this out of LB 407 and make at least the \$6 million cut at this point. There are very painful cuts that we need to make in here, and this one isn't an easy one, but I think it's one that I feel we need to make. I do have an amendment on LB 759 to fund this program with 3 cents of cigarette tax, and I'm not sure where the body will stand on that. But it would be 33 cents instead of 30, and the 3 cents would go to fund this program. Of course, the other option is somehow out of the tobacco settlement funds. I've made a commitment at least not to go there. But we certainly know that there's a lot of money that comes into that fund. There are a lot of uses for it. But if the program has substantial merit, then I think we ought to be able to tie it in directly to the revenue we get from tobacco or cigarette tax, and fund it. But I think it ought to come out, as far as the General Fund usage is concerned. And I will support the Raikes amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Bromm. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Call the question.

SENATOR CUDABACK: The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do see five hands. The question before the body is, shall debate cease on AM1802 to LB 407? All in favor of the motion vote aye, and opposed nay. We're voting on ceasing